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| | ACTION | | DIRECT REPLY | | PREPARE REPLY |
| | APPROVAL | | DISPATCH | | RECOMMENDATION |
| | COMMENT | | FILE | | RETURN |
| | CONCURRENCE | | INFORMATION | | SIGNATURE |

REMARKS:

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~~Top Secret~~ 19

(Security Classification)

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CONTROL NO.

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Friday 28 October 1977 CG NIDC 77/250C

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**NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION**

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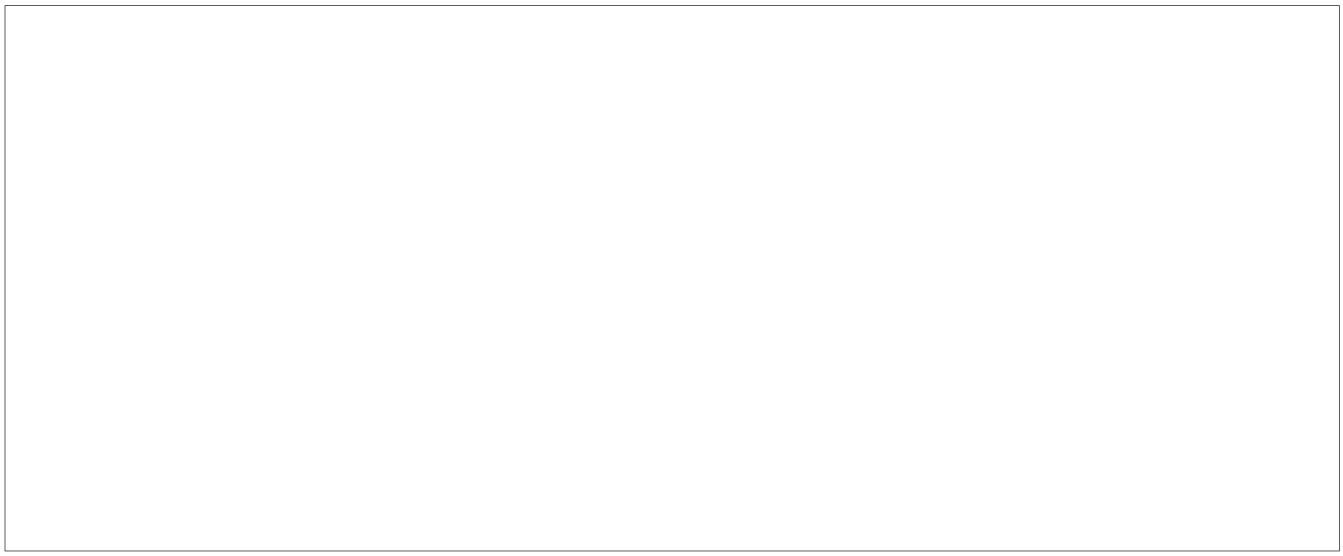

ARGENTINA: Army-Navy Friction

3.5(c) *Argentine President Videla intends to use the visit of Secretary Vance next month to reassert his and the army's political pre-eminence over navy chief Admiral Massera and other less moderate military rivals. The opportunistic Massera has been increasing pressure on Videla, who is attempting to increase support for himself and the army. Recurring friction between the army and navy commanders could ultimately threaten*

3.5(c) *the ability of the junta to govern.//*

Videla no doubt believes that a successful visit will enhance his image at home and at least temporarily put a damper on Massera. To establish his leadership credentials and boost the prestige of the Argentine navy, Massera has stepped up public criticism of Videla's economic and foreign policies and has engineered a number of incidents designed to build a high national profile for himself and the navy. Senior Argentine officials now believe Massera is about to begin public contacts with politicians and trade unions.//

3.5(c) In an apparent attempt to upstage Videla's talks with Secretary Vance, Massera this week embarked on an official trip to Italy and Spain. He had first sought to extend an invitation to the US Chief of Naval Operations, but when this plan failed, Massera secured official invitations for himself from the two countries.//



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The President already has reproached Massera for a number of his actions, and relations between the two junta members reportedly are strained.//

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The army hierarchy is irritated with Massera, but many officers reportedly believe that the admiral's conduct will prove counterproductive in the long run. Massera may have gained some political ground as a result of his recent actions, but Videla's standing within the military probably has been strengthened some by the army's reaction to Massera.

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